

News, Updates, & More

Varner Family Genealogy

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Old newsletters and additional genealogy information is found on the Varner Family website.

<http://brucevarner.com/VarnerGenealogy.htm>

After consideration, I have decided that for the known future I will not video record reunions talks. Research has shown me that to create a well-made video would take considerable work to ensure everything comes out correctly. I do not foresee having the time to devote towards this. Sorry! Looks like you all will have to actually show up at the reunions.....

QUESTIONS / NEWS

Q: Dee Bremer wrote: ".....we have to remember that the descendants of George Varner could match with the Varner genes coming from Thomas Owen's wife Nancy....."

A: Dee brings up good points. With Autosomal DNA becoming more useful as time progresses, we need to keep in mind it is highly likely that the DNA descendants of George Varner of Missouri carry not only Varner ancestor Autosomal DNA through George, but might carry Autosomal DNA through Harriet!

Remember that Harriet Owen Varner's believed parents were Thomas Owen and his wife Nancy Varner Owen. How likely is it that Nancy Varner Owen was in fact also related to George? We do not know, but it is possible!

Wanted all to understand that possibility as we progress having more and more family individuals submit Autosomal DNA.

As we recall, Autosomal DNA, is DNA that is passed down to both male and female descendants.

Another reasons for more folks to be DNA tested. The DNA world is now opened to more than just Y-DNA for men and mtDNA for women. Get Autosomal DNA testing completed, everyone. Even if testing does not help resolve questions now, it likely will help others down the road when we are gone.....

George Varner of Missouri Direct Line DNA

I am still trying to set aside sufficient time to complete comparisons to Billy Joe Varner's autosomal matches at Gedmatch.com. Now that summer is over I hope to devote more to this effort.

Also still need to have several of us spend time digging into North Carolina records to find possible links between Billy Joe Varner and William Virgil Varner families in that location.

Riggs/Varner Connection

At a standstill at the moment.

Destiny, the Riggs Autosomal DNA link in Washington state to Nancy Ann Varner's Riggs partner have come to a momentary halt. Have not been able to get a response from Destiny recently.

I am pursuing Tracy, the daughter of Pat Riggs. Pat is a direct blood descendant of Edmund Riggs and therefore should be a very close, or exact match to the male descendants of Nancy Ann Varner.

The only current contact info I have for Tracy is her Ancestry.com ID. Unfortunately, she has not logged into that account in over a year.

Once contact is established, the hope is to have Pat do the Y-DNA testing so we can actually compare the results.

A Different Approach to Determining George Varner of Missouri's Ancestry?

Dee's email caused me to consider an additional approach to working through George Varner of Missouri's ancestry from Georgia. Much research has been completed trying to determine this ancestry trail. We know George was from Oglethorpe County. We believe his father was also in Oglethorpe County. But from there the trail takes so many splits, because of all the different Varner families, that we have been unable to make the leap past. The William Virgil Varner match to Billy Joe Varner helps us know that our genetic Varner's lived in North Carolina. That was expected, but we do not know if this was before or after our lines diverged.

How about another approach in conjunction with continued research on the male line?

That approach could be through Nancy Varner Owen, Thomas Owen's wife. Find out which Varner line Nancy Varner Owen belonged to, and maybe find our George Varner line!

We know a series of facts established through records:

- Thomas Owen & George Varner of Missouri knew each other in Missouri (Newspaper account, land records)

- Thomas Owen families and George Varner of Missouri families lived near each other in more than one location in Missouri (Boone Co. & Pettis Co.)
- George Varner of Missouri was from Oglethorpe Co. Georgia
- Thomas Owen was from Oglethorpe Co. Georgia
- Thomas Owen married Nancy Varner in Oglethorpe Co. Georgia
- Thomas Owen family and George Varner both came to Missouri around the same time.

Would it not make sense that possibly Nancy Varner Owen was related to our George? Even if these two Varner families are not genetically the same, it still could likely help substantiate other common locations of the Owen and Varner families.

So how to go about finding more about Nancy Varner Owen? This is difficult because in that timeframe (1810 Thomas married Nancy) census records only named the household head. Others were a number.

But there are likely other records out there. Will not be easy to sort through because of the proliferation of Nancy Varner's. The Owen family does need concentrated study.

More research on local church records. Wills and other records for the Owen families in Oglethorpe. Land records indicating how close Varner's were to the Owen family, both in Oglethorpe

and earlier before Owen's moved to Georgia.

This would be another avenue to pursue in hopes of finding that lost connection to our George. Just needs to be worked.

Why is DNA So Confusing?

As I now am a co-administrator on the FTDNA Varner Surname Project, my job requires trying to answer questions that Varner participants have about the surname project. There are so many specifics about DNA that it is hard to know them all, and harder still to remember them.

I thought I would reproduce here, an interaction the Family Tree DNA Varner Surname administrators had this month with a participant in project who did not understand some very basic rules behind Y-DNA (Male to Male Results). The names have been changed to protect the innocent.....

That participant wrote to the admins about why he matched another person in the project at a deviation of only 1, yet we were telling him that he in fact did not closely match that individual. Here is the redacted answer provided, in hopes of helping to understand. The chart referenced in the response is at the very bottom of this newsletter.

"Hi ~~Aaaaa~~,

I think I see where you are having the misunderstanding. You are only a 1

deviation from ~~Xxxxx~~ when using the Y-12 comparison. That mean very little. When you change, so that you are comparing using the Y-67 settings, you are a 6 deviation from ~~Xxxxx~~. That means in fact that you are NOT closely related to ~~Xxxxx~~.

You really need to study the differences that the number of markers make until you understand that difference. Until you understand, you will continually be misled as to connections. I know this is very confusing. It is like the learning curve on many other subjects. It seems muddled until all of a sudden it is clear.

I am a visual person, so further down is an example that I understand. Please read through the rest of this before going to the chart at the bottom. It will make so much more sense if you read this first. When you go into FTDNA and look at your matches, you will find that at Y12 Markers, you match 8 "Varner's. You find this by going to your Matches page. It will by default be set to markers: 12. If you enter "Varner" in the cell for (Last Name Start With:), it will show you ALL the people with last name of Varner that you match with at Y12. In your case this is 8 people. Let's only discuss two: ~~Xxxxx~~ Varner and ~~Yyyyy~~ Varner.

At this level ~~Xxxxx~~ is a genetic distance (Deviation) of 1 away from you. ~~Yyyyy~~ is a genetic distance (Deviation) of 0 away from you. This means very little because there are so many of the

markers that are not considered at this low level.

Now change the markers in the drop down box from 12 to 25. (Be sure and leave the Varner name in the Last Name Starts With cell) You will immediately notice that 7 of the other Varner named people no longer appear. Only ~~Yyyyyy~~ Varner remains, at a 1 deviation. That is because ALL the other Varner named people (Including ~~Xxxxxx~~) now have so many marker differences from you that FTDNA no longer considers them "matches" to you.

Now change the markers in the drop down box from 25 to 37. (Be sure and leave the Varner name in the Last Name Starts With cell) You now notice that ~~Yyyyyy~~ is still listed, but at a 2 deviation from you.

One last time change the markers in the drop down box from 37 to 67. (Be sure and leave the Varner name in the Last Name Starts With cell) You see that no one matches you at this point. ~~Yyyyyy~~ has disappeared also. The reason ~~Yyyyyy~~ has disappeared, is that he only has submitted the Y-DNA 37 test. So, those markers that would occur above 37 are not there to compare. You have no way of knowing if ~~Yyyyyy~~ matches you or not at the Y-DNA67 level.

Now to the chart below. I hope that this visual representation of the information will make sense. Please understand that I just placed the red markers at random

locations within each testing range. This is not necessarily the exact location of those marker differences.....

The colored areas near the top of the chart represent the different level of Y-DNA tests, 12, 25, 37, 67, & 111. The cells underneath represent ~~Xxxxxx~~, ~~Yyyyyy~~, and you. Each square to the right of each name represent 1 marker. ~~Xxxxxx~~ has taken the Y-DNA 67 test, so he has 67 markers. ~~Yyyyyy~~ has only taken the Y-DNA37 test, so 37 markers. You have also taken the Y-DNA67 test so 67 square beside your name. The red squares indicate a deviation between you (No red squares) and ~~Xxxxxx~~ or ~~Yyyyyy~~.

Re-read above and notice that ~~Xxxxxx~~ showed a 1 deviation from you at the 12 Marker level. So I placed 1 red square in his markers under the 12 Marker (Grey) area. By the next 25 Marker comparison, ~~Xxxxxx~~ was gone. So there must have been so many deviations between you and ~~Xxxxxx~~ in this area, that FTDNA no longer considered you two a match. I have represented this by placing several deviations (Red Squares) in the area of the 25 markers, but after the area included in the 12 markers. So, you and ~~Xxxxxx~~ are NOT closely related. Any further comparisons, say the 111 Marks test, are really not necessary as you already know that you are not closely related.

Now re-read above and notice that ~~Yyyyyy~~ showed a 0 deviation at 12

markers. ~~Yyyyy~~ showed a 1 deviation from you at 25 markers. At 37 markers ~~Yyyyy~~ showed a 2 deviation from you. At markers above 37 ~~Yyyyy~~ disappeared. That was because he has only paid for the 37 Marker test. To represent this I have placed the first red square in ~~Yyyyy~~'s markers in the Y-DNA25 markers area. Remember that at 12 markers there was no deviation and at 25 markers there was 1, so the deviation occurred somewhere after the first 12 markers..... Then at 37 markers ~~Yyyyy~~ is a 2 deviation from you, so I placed a second red square within the Y-DNA37 range, but after the 25 marker area.

You will need to maximize this email to see the full chart. Let me know if this does not make sense ~~Aaaaaa~~.

To me you have two ways to proceed. You may contact and encourage ~~Yyyyy~~ to upgrade to the Y-DNA67 test. Only then will you know if the two of you are still at this same 2 deviation level. That could also reveal that you are not related that closely if there are several deviations at the 67 Marker level. There is another caveat. Even remaining at the 2 deviation level would still place you two possibly many generations back before you find a MRCA (Most Recent Common Ancestor). Maybe too many to be of importance in genealogy? Then again it could produce something much closer. All a matter of probabilities.

As an example I personally have two ancestors who at Y-DNA67 match me at a 1 deviation. Even though this seems close, we discovered through other genealogy research, that in fact are MRCA is 6 generations back from me & 5 generations back from each of them. I tell you this so that you understand that deviations are random. They can occur every generation, or not occur for several generations. All back to probabilities.

A second way you could proceed is through Autosomal comparisons. Not as accurate and not relevant for as many generations back, but it could provide new avenues to study of which you are currently unaware. Study Autosomal and see what those possibilities might be. Just ideas.....

Good luck in the search.
Bruce"

As you can see, details are important in DNA comparison. Also, as I have always tried to mention, DNA results are probabilities, not specific answers. Maybe someday as more people test, but not now. Separate, detailed genealogy research to confirm the DNA is required.

Fall is here! Another summer gone. Time is fleeting. Do something important before you no longer have any time left.....

Bruce Varner

